

The Gender Gap in Paid and Unpaid Work
: Focusing on the impact of Working-From-Home on Women's and Men's Time
Spent on Work, Housework, and Childcare

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[SYNOPSIS]

This study examined the impact of work-from-home (WFH) on time spent on paid work, housework and childcare, with a particular focus on the couple's work location arrangements. The results of an online survey for married, regular employees living in the Tokyo metropolitan area with a child aged 8 or younger, who WFH at least once a week, highlighted the following four points.

Firstly, there was a significant gap in paid work, housework and childcare time between women and men, even under the same work arrangements.

Secondly, it was also found that men spend less time on paid work and more time doing housework and childcare when WFH. An analysis of the proportion of men engaged in paid work, housework and childcare in different time segments showed that on days when men WFH, the proportion of men engaged in paid work decreases from the early evening hours compared to days when they work on site, and that the proportion of men engaged in housework and childcare is higher during the evening hours. Therefore, the results indicated that men's WFH enables them to leave work earlier and engage in housework and childcare during evening hours.

Third, the results also showed that women's housework and childcare time increases on days when only the female respondents WFH, but that the increase in women's housework and childcare time is moderated to a certain extent if their spouses also WFH.

Finally, it was observed that both female and male respondents tended to shift the time of housework and childcare later in the evening on days when both the respondents and their spouses work on site.

These results indicate that the gender gap in paid work and domestic work can be reduced by facilitating the integration of WFH and on-site work among couples.